



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

First Phase of Upper River Cleanup to Begin Soon

Sheboygan River and Harbor Site

Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

August 2004

For more information...

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Site-related documents may be reviewed at:

Mead Public Library

710 N. 8th St.
Sheboygan

Sheboygan City Hall

828 Center Ave.
Sheboygan

Certain EPA information can be viewed electronically at:

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/sites/sheboygan>

PCBs, polychlorinated biphenyls, are toxic chemicals that were once widely used as industrial coolants, insulators and lubricants. PCBs can concentrate in the environment and the food chain, resulting in health hazards to people, fish and wildlife. Because of these dangers, the U.S. government banned the manufacture of PCBs in 1976. PCBs still in use are strictly regulated.

Cleanup of contaminated soil, flood plain soil, and ground water (water beneath the earth's surface) at the former Tecumseh facility will begin in September. Investigation and source control will be done in the first phase of the cleanup. EPA is requiring Pollution Risk Services (the company that bought the Tecumseh Products Co. property in Sheboygan Falls) to look at ways to stop PCB contamination that may be coming from soil and ground water at the facility. The next phase will include evaluation and cleanup of stream and flood plain soil. This work is being done according to a May 2003 legal agreement called a consent decree.

At this time, only cleanup of the former Tecumseh facility is taking place. Actual Sheboygan River cleanup is scheduled to start next year. Subsequent phases to clean up the middle river, lower river, and inner harbor will be done separately. The upper river will be cleaned up first so lower portions won't be recontaminated during later phases of the project.

Cleanup plan

The goal of the cleanup is to protect human health and the environment from the dangers posed by PCBs from the site as well as to reduce the chances of PCBs moving into the Sheboygan River and Harbor system. As mentioned, the first phase will identify and control the sources of PCB contamination at the site. Ground water, PCBs heading toward the river (pathways), surface soil, and riverbank soil will be cleaned up. For the most part, this cleanup is the same as the process described in the final decision document called the record of decision. However, based on additional investigation, a few minor changes were made to the original agreement including:

- Skipping additional pre-design investigation prior to proceeding with the cleanup of the upper river.
- Installing a trench to intercept ground water (and eliminating detailed studies on the need for the trench).
- Changing the cleanup boundaries so that all work done in the upper river occurs at the same time to minimize disturbances to the river.
- Doing pre-investigation work for the flood plain and upper river before the second phase of the cleanup begins to ensure that current site conditions are known.
- Doing some pre-design work for the second phase while PCB removal for the upper river continues.

These changes were agreed to by EPA and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.



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Ground water cleanup activities

Ground water cleanup will include:

- Building a ground water trench to collect, contain and control dissolved PCBs in ground water flowing from the former Tecumseh facility to the Sheboygan River.

- Installing additional wells near the trench to determine its effectiveness.
- Monitoring the ground water twice yearly for five years at the former Tecumseh facility and then less frequently as appropriate.

Eliminate contamination moving toward the river

River cleanup will include:

- Removal of PCB-contaminated material from the river-bank area between the trench and the river.
- Removal of contaminated soil along the underground pipes originally used to discharge water from the former Tecumseh facility to the river.
- Removal of portions of these discharge pipes and the surrounding soil.

Address surface and riverbank soil

Surface and riverbank cleanup will include:

- Cleaning surface soil so that PCBs do not exceed safe levels.
- Removing surface and subsurface soil along the riverbank where PCBs exceed safe levels.

Introducing...

Pablo Valentin has assumed the role of remedial project manager for the Sheboygan River and Harbor Superfund site. He has worked for EPA since 1990, mostly in the Superfund program. In his 14 years with EPA, he has managed Superfund projects in Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana. Among those projects are two that involve PCBs -- Ford Outfall in Michigan and Sugar Creek in Indiana. From 1998-2002, he returned to his home area to serve in the EPA Region 2 office in San Juan, Puerto Rico. During that time, he worked in the water division enforcing the Clean Water Act on water filtration plants. Valentin has a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of Puerto Rico.